

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 11-15, 18, 22-27, and 29-49 are presently pending, of which Claims 34-43 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 7-10, 16, 17, and 19-21 have been canceled.

Response to Examiner's Comment

The Examiner states that it would be preferable to use the term "first open-faced cube-corner surfaces" in Claims 44 and 45.

Claims 44, 45, and 48 have been amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. No new matter has been added.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 32, 44, and 46-48 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benson *et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,287,670) in view of Martin *et al.* (U.S. Patent 5,786,066).

Independent Claim 32 recites a retroreflective chip that includes a structure having a plurality of open-faced cube-corner surfaces formed therein, wherein the structure has a length less than about 457 micrometers. Independent Claim 44 recites retroreflective chips including open-faced cube-corner surfaces with each chip having a length less than about 457 micrometers.

The rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons. First, it is not seen how Martin *et al.* teaches chips with each chip having a length less than about 457 micrometers. As the Examiner pointed out, Martin *et al.* disclose at column 3, line 36-37 individual retroreflective prisms with side dimensions of less than about 0.025 inches (635 micrometers). Although the height of the prisms is about 449 micrometers, the length along the window side of each prism is about 898 micrometers.

Assuming *arguendo*, that Martin *et al.* disclose chips having lengths less than about 457 micrometers, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner is improperly combining the teachings of Benson *et al.* and Martin *et al.* Benson *et al.* disclose open-faced sheeting while Martin *et al.* disclose traditional cube-corner prisms wherein the retroreflected light passes through the prisms. There is no teaching or suggestion of cutting or forming the open-faced sheeting of Benson *et al.* into chips having lengths less than about 457 micrometers. Martin *et al.* disclose stripping off individual retroreflective prisms from a release coating.

As illustrated in FIG. 14 of the present application, an open-faced retroreflective chip 50 includes open-faced surfaces wherein the chip has a length 52 less than about 457 micrometers. It is respectfully submitted that there is no teaching or suggestion in Benson *et al.* and Martin *et al.* to combine the teachings together to render the claims of the present application unpatentable.

This rejection is thus respectfully traversed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the allowance of Claims 1-6, 11-15, 18, 22-27, 29-31, and 49.

The Examiner objected to Claims 33 and 45 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims.


It is respectfully submitted that Claims 33 and 45 depend from allowable claims.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C.

By 
Erik L. Ence
Registration No. 42,511
Telephone: (978) 341-0036
Facsimile: (978) 341-0136

Dated: August 16, 2004
Concord, Massachusetts 01742-9133